and allow it to germinate before the top layer dries. This plough is also appropriate when as a result of a limited water supply the task is to prevent a premature drying-out of the soil. None of the imported ploughs tested hitherto has proved genuinely superior to the local plough, when mechanical, agricultural and economic factors are taken into account.' 407 241

The Egyptian plough is the resultant of two interacting factors, the nature of the soil and the means of the fellah (it costs no more than P.T. 100). Its mechanism is so simple that it does not have the effect of dispensing with the ploughman's effort or of putting a distance between him and his furrow; so contact between man and soil remains close.

To level down the tops of the furrows and break up the clods of earth the fellah uses a *zahhâfa*. This is nothing but a rough beam of wood, or the trunk of a palm tree, about twelve feet long, on which the fellah stands while it is pulled by a pair of draught-animals. This very primitive instrument thus acts both as roller and harrow, and is sometimes used also to cover in the seed sown by hand. The *zahhâfa* is used after ploughing, and about four feddans can be treated in a day.

To level the land, which since it is artificially irrigated must be as even as possible, the fellah uses his *kassâbia*, a sort of coffer weighing about 120 lbs and costing about 75 piastres. It has two sides, is open along the front, and is held by two handles, which the fellah raises in order to scrape off the mounds and fill up the hollows with the earth thus picked up. [435]

The *gamoossa* and the donkey have often been mentioned, and will continue to be, for they are the two chief aids of the fellah, and are well adapted both to his needs and to Egyptian conditions. 231

The *gamoossa*, the poor man's cow, is a mud-coloured buffalo, stronger than the ox, and extremely resistant to disease. It must have more fodder than any other draught animal. On account of its great usefulness the fellah takes more care of it than he does of himself, which is not saying much.

If properly fed, the *gamoossa* gives more milk than any cow in Egypt. In winter and spring it needs to graze

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Watering is not enough; the soil needs nourishment to make it productive. The fellah knows only too well that the fertilising powers of the soil must be revived. Together with his wife and children he does his best to find, at as little expense as possible, as much animal or chemical manure as he can.

Pigeon droppings, silt cleaned out of canals and mixed with grass, and, above all, soil impregnated with stable-dung (*sebâkh bàladi*), (but never human excrement), village débris and age-old dust, all contribute nitrogen to his field. The rubbish mounds (*koms*) of dead cities become quarries to which the fellah turns for his manure. This *sebakh kufri*, as it is called, is found in varying qualities all over Egypt; but nowadays most of what is left is of poor quality.

In the cliffs of Upper Egypt there is also a kind of sand (*marog*) and a clay (*tafla*) which serve as a poor manure, and need much labour to bring to the fields. But all these manures are lacking in salt content. The used-up soil needs artificial remedies. Despite the fellah's hidebound methods his sympathy with the soil has helped him to understand its need. Since the early years of this century, good *sebâkh kufri* having become almost unobtainable, he has begun to use chemical manures (*semàd*). Before the present war (1939), Egypt used to import more than half a million tons of natural nitrates from Chile, the earliest known source, and synthetic nitrates from Germany and England. These may be used on all except leguminous crops (berseem, fenugreek, and beans), which need phosphates.

The distribution of *semàd* is most efficiently organised by the *Crédit Agricole d'Egypte*, which sells it by the sack on credit, and also by the Royal Agricultural Society and the big import firms. There are about 2,000 depots spread all over the country. The chief customers are the big landowners and the State Domains, which advance to the owners and tenant farmers the amount required for each holding against part of the crop. Before the war a sack of 100 kilograms, delivered to the village, used to cost from 65 to 70 piastres. Corn crops require the most expensive fertilisers, but the cheapest qualities are good enough for *berseem*.

norag. This is a heavy wooden seat, supported on a rough chassis and moving on three axles armed with eleven solid sharp-edged discs for breaking up the straw. The driver sits in the chair and guides the *gamoossa* round in a circle over the ears so that the discs chop them up, while another worker throws fresh stalks under the machine. The *norag*, which is peculiar to Egypt, costs about L.E. 8. An even simpler variety without the cutting discs averages L.E. 3.

Winnowing is done, as in most Mediterranean countries, by throwing the chaff which contains the corn into the air in the direction of the wind, after it has been trampled and chopped up For this the fellaheen use a two- or four-pronged wooden fork, called a *garuf*. With one *norag* and several *garufs* they can deal with the produce of about 25 feddans.

Last of all the grain is sifted in large sieves by the women and put into sacks, jars or baskets, ready for sale.

D. Berseem

In summer cattle are fed either on chopped straw mixed with beans, or on barley ; but in winter they live on *berseem*, an Egyptian species of clover (*trifolium alexandrinum*). *Berseem* is cultivated everywhere and covers a fifth of the total acreage, for it nourishes the ground as well as the cattle by absorbing the nitrogen from the air into the soil. It provides excellent forage, grows quickly and brings good returns for a minimum of work. The fellaheen sow it between September and November, often after maize, cotton or rice, and before taking away the old stalks which serve to protect the seedlings. After fifty days or so it is ready for a first cutting, followed by four more at intervals of 35 days; the cattle graze on it as it grows Two thirds of a feddan will feed a *gamoossa*, or a quarter of a feddan a donkey, for one season.

E. Other Food Crops

There are a number of other foodstuffs which are produced by the fellah's labour from the soil of Egypt. It will suffice to mention the most important.

Rice was brought from India under the Caliphs, and is cultivated in the well-watered regions of Damietta and the Northern Delta.

527 Sometimes, as at Shemm el Nessim (44), the feast of Spring, the faithful of both religions mingle in the same holiday and the same rejoicings. The ceremonies may last several days. Formless processions pass, with banners floating in the wind. Arabs come to show off their horsemanship; swings and roundabouts are set up for the chil-
[143] dren. A thousand booths are arranged in the open air, for the sale of sugar dolls, sweet sesame, roast peas and monkey nuts (45). The crowd laughs, sings, and makes merry, spending in a single day the savings of a whole year and living only for the moment.

443 At the market too there is a crowd. The market is a
437 piece of waste land, sometimes enclosed, outside the bigger villages. The Egyptian Markets Company has established 123 country markets, which may be recognised by their iron railings, in such towns as Mehalla, Embaba, and Tahta. They take a toll of one or two piastres from each seller.

The market is usually held once a week and lasts from dawn to midday. The sellers, men and women, make their way to it at daybreak in long files, choose a spot to lay out their wares, and squat down behind them to wait for customers. Buyers soon appear from all the surrounding villages, and then all is a noisy, confused mêlée of men, cattle and goods.

Piece-goods and hardware are sold by professional merchants who come from the chief town or are going the round of the villages. These merchants get their stock from the wholesalers in the cities. But vegetables, poultry, butter and eggs are sold by the fellah himself, or rather by the fellah's wife, who is a better hand at bargaining. When forced to do so, the fellah brings his *gamoossa* or goat to the market for sale.

432 The buyers are other fellaheen who need manufactured
435 goods or foodstuffs which they cannot produce themselves. For two piastres they can replace a broken waterpot (*ballas*) or a worn-out basket. Eight piastres will buy a big pair of drawers, and five a shirt. A *gallabiya* may be had for twenty piastres, and for thirty a *milaya*, or woman's veil. Better qualities are on sale for the *'omda* or for a villager who has done good business. A *gallabiya* or a *milaya* worth 100 piastres — that is something for a man or woman to be proud of.

 [No.(54).- Analyst]

Provisions also have to be bought, according to need, opportunity and means. Here are a few prices, the first column representing pre-war prices, the second those of 1943.

Meat	Pre-war	1943
Beef, per oke	P.T. 8	P.T. 20
Mutton, „ „	„ 12	„ 30
Kerosene for lamps or stove		
18-litre tin	P.T. 10-11	P.T. 20
1 litre	7 mills.	12 mills.
Cotton-seed oil for cooking, per oke	P.T. 6-	P.T. 10
Tea, per oke	„ 25	„ 80
Sugar, per oke	„ 3 1/8	„ 6
Coffee, per rotl	„ 5	„ 11
Cigarettes, per box of 20	„ 2 or 3	„ 4

Farm produce is bought by the local *bourgeois* or by agents, who send it elsewhere. Prices in the village market run as follows :—

	Pre-war	1943
Chickens, per pair	P.T. 8–15	P.T. 40
Eggs, per dozen	„ 1 1/2 – 3	„ 5
Clarified butter (*samn*), per oke	„ 12–16	„ 36
Rice, per oke	„ 2– 3	„ 3 1/8
Lentils, per oke	„ 2– 3	„ 5

Cereals and cotton are bought up by middlemen, or by agents of the big firms in Cairo and Alexandria. The prices vary a good deal. A *cantar* of cotton may sell at 300-550 piastres, according to the quality of the staple, the rate of exchange, or the impatience of the fellah. The small merchant buys a *rotl* of cotton from the gleaners for 7 milliemes, and sells a *cantar* at 252 piastres. An *ardeb* of corn (about 150 kilograms) will sell for 110-140 piastres, the price varying as before with the quality and quantity. For other goods the variation is less. The prices are lower or higher according to the distance of the market from the Nile, the season of the year and the fluctuations of supply and demand. For some classes of goods the price has hardly changed for thirty years. It still sometimes happens in the villages that more than one fourth of the business is done by barter, but the use of money is becoming more and more the rule.

39. *T*.—This is not quite true. Fellaheen are frequently to be seen in the Nile and in the canals, swimming and splashing about for pleasure after a hot day's work. [113] [515] [526]

40. *T*.—In 1943 the cheaper cotton stuffs were selling at a controlled price of P.T. 6 a metre, and a tailor would ask at least 15 piastres for the work. [463] [435]

41. *T*.—At Akhmîm and Nagada in Upper Egypt a considerable weaving-industry still flourishes. The latter has a considerable trade with the Sudan. [288]

42. Dr. Theodore Bilharz (d. 1862) was a German lecturer at the Cairo School of Medicine. In 1858 he solved the mystery of this endemic disease by discovering the parasite that causes it, and thus made attack upon it possible. [744]

43. Department of Public Health : REPORTS AND NOTES ON ANKYLOSTOMIASIS AND BILHARZIASIS IN EGYPT: Government Press, Cairo, 1924,

This work contains a complete bibliography on the two diseases, with an account of their ravages in various villages of Egypt, and of the Government's attempts to fight them.

44. Ibnet ish-Shaty' : EL-RIF EL MASRI (THE EGYPTIAN COUNTRYSIDE), p. 125.

45. In 1935 Egypt imported 7,888 tons of coffee beans from Java, Santos and Yemen. [439]

46. See the ANNUAL REPORT for 1938 of the Central Bureau of Information on Narcotics. However, in a technical essay in the REVUE DES QUESTIONS SOCIALES (July 1940, pp. 94-106) entitled IS BLACK TEA HARMFUL TO THE HEALTH AND WORK OF THE PEASANTRY? the author (who remains anonymous) feels justified in giving a negative answer. [272]

47. The famous Egyptian cigarettes are all made of imported tobacco. The intention was to avoid the danger of hasheesh as well as to gratify the Turkish Government. (The smoking of very cheap cigarettes has now become extremely common among the fellaheen. - *T*, 1945.) [276]

48. BAMIA and MOLOKHIA are two mucilaginous plants. The former, known in British colonies as OKRA, is [241] [262]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

52.

Reward of Politeness.

Like the German proverb: "One need but carry hat in hand to travel safely throughout the land." [539x 576]

In reading this picturesque description of the reward of politeness, do not fail to remember that the person speaking is a poor, Egyptian peasant earning only his two and a half piastres a day. (About twelve cents). [465]

Ṣabāḥ el-ḫēr, ya lamme!
Ṣabbaḥ el-ward ʿala-z-zēn.
Ya min ṣabbaḥ, saddē dēno,
wištara, we-lā baʾāš ʿalē dēn,
wištara ʿabd balfēn,
yistāhil rukūb el-ḫēl.

Good morning to you assembled here!
The roses wished the glorious one good morning.
He who wishes a good morning, wipes out his debts,
And buys and has no debts, [467]
And buys a black slave for two thousand, [435]
Who is worthy to ride upon horses. [554]

2. "The glorious one" is the Prophet. With this greeting of the roses, compare No. 6, l. 7 and No. 7, l. 2.

3. That is, at an exceptionally high price. The coin is not indicated; 2000 is frequently used as a large, round number. [801]

6. After the manner of a gentleman.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

57.

Rallying One's Self.

X 539 583 The payment of a certain sum to the wife, which shall remain her personal property, is one of the indispensable things pertaining to a legal marriage (compare the expression in No. 71, l. 1). The amount of the sum depends, naturally, upon the position and the charms of the bride. The lowest legally allowed sum, is about a dollar and a quarter (five shillings).

A pretty example of a poor peasant poking fun at himself. The dowry which he is able to command is no more than ● [435] the price of a skull-cap, namely: seven and a half cents (four pence).

Yabu libde, ya fellāḥ, yāne!
wana biddi aḫod Behāne
waddīha nuṣṣ el-'abḍīye,
wel-bā'i agīb bo ṭa'īye.

O I with the felt cap, I, the peasant!
I wish to marry Behāne!
And I will give her the half of my wages,
And with the rest I will buy me a skull-cap.

291 1. Libde is the thick, closely fitting, felt cap, which the poor peasants wear. Usually it is of coarse, brown felt. Abu-libde, "father (that is: wearer) of the libde" is a frequent term of derision for a peasant.

3. Another said: nuṣṣ ed-damkīye.

4. Ṭā'īye is the white, knitted or crocheted, likewise closely fitting, little cap, which the men wear underneath the felt-cap.

59.

*539 **Good Reason for Pride!**

Dīnâre libiset mandīl
u-mkallafâ sittīn.
Ya 'aši', ya meskīn,
ṭarraḥūk 'al-ḫašab!

Dināre has put on a head-kerchief,
Which has cost her all of sixty (faḍḍa).
Now, poor lover,
Have thyself buried!

[551] 1. Dināre is a girl's name.

4. Literally: Mayest thou be stretched upon the wood (the bier). The girl is so proud of her cheap finery. Sixty (faḍḍa) are about one and a half piastres, equalling seven and a half cents.

● [435]